

No 12

A LECTURE

ON THE
AUTHENTICITY & SCRIPTURAL CHARACTER

OF THE

OF THE

BOOK OF MORMON.

BY

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DELIVERED AT THE TOWN HALL, CHARLESTOWN, MASS
ON SUNDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 4th, AND WEDNES-
DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 7th.

REPORTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS FRIEND C. P. BROWN

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY J. E. FARWELL, NO. 4 WASHINGTON STREET.

1844

INTRODUCTION.

THE following Lecture was delivered by particular request to crowded audiences, in the Town Hall of Charlestown, on Sunday Evening, February 4th, and on Wednesday Evening, February 7th.

The reporter submits his sketches to the public, because the subject is important, and may lead to investigation that will drive prejudice from the minds of many sincere inquirers after truth.

It has been generally supposed that the Latter Day Saints, commonly called Mormons, hold the Mormon Bible—as it is falsely called—as their only rule of faith and practice, disregarding the Scriptures of Truth, contained in the Old and New Testaments.

This error has prevailed because the people will not listen to the truth. Slandrous tongues and lying lips have been busy against the book. But it stands immoveably fixed on the Rock of Ages, and the gates of hell, and opposition of the sectarian world cannot prevail against it. If the doctrine is of men, it will come to nought, but if God is its author, it must prevail.

C. P. B.

Boston, February, 1844.

LECTURE.

By particular desire I propose to call the attention of my hearers, this evening, to the consideration of the claims of the Book of Mormon as a book of revelation, and to prove from the Scripture of Truth that it is spoken of by the Holy prophets ; that its appearance is in perfect accordance with prophecy ; that all the circumstances of times and places, the character of the book, the condition of the world, and every circumstance spoken of in reference to it, are in perfect harmony with the declarations of Holy Writ. A book was promised, and a book must come forth or the scriptures fail.

Some people accuse the Church of Latter Day Saints with holding and believing in *another* Bible, and of denying the truths of God as contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament. This is a base and unqualified slander. We hold no other Bible, we believe in no other. And we believe that every word in the Bible must needs come to pass, for it is the word of the living God. And further, we believe that the inspired men who wrote those pages, meant truly and literally what they said, We believe that God would not direct his prophets and apostles to write one thing when he meant another ; to hide in mysticism and uncertainty the word of life, and then punish erring man for not believing in what was shrouded in darkness to their mind. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for re-

proof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.”
As such we receive it

The records of the Holy Scriptures then is our Bible ; but we believe that *the book* promised in Isaiah *has* been given to men, and it is indeed a *wonder*, for in relation to it the wisdom of the wise men hath perished, and the understanding of the prudent hath been hid.

My Text will be found in the XXVIII Chapter of Isaiah, 21st and 22d verse. —

21. For the Lord shall rise up as in Mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.

22. Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your hand be made strong, for I have heard from the Lord God of hosts a consumption, even determined upon the whole earth.

The Prophet Isaiah is generally denominated the evangelical prophet.

You are aware, my friends, that the words which I have chosen for the foundation of my remarks this evening, have been applied to the establishment of the Gospel covenant in the days of our Saviour. But I shall take the position, that this marvellous work, and a wonder here spoken of, alludes to an event that will take place ages after the establishment of the Gospel by Christ and his apostles, and even after the Gospel has passed away, or to speak more properly, after the Church has been disorganized and divided into sects, names and parties; and driven into the wilderness.

I will now call your attention to the 9th chapter and 6th verse of the prophecy of Isaiah.

6. “For unto us a child is born, a son is given, and he shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, &c.”

Here you see is a plain prophecy of the Sonship of Christ, and also his character as a Wonderful Counsellor to give laws or doctrines to govern his Church.

By a close examination of this Prophet, from the *eighth* to the end of the *twenty third* chapter, it will be seen that

he has fully testified of all the circumstances that characterized the setting up of Christ's Church and Kingdom in the days of his incarnation, even his being bruised for our infirmities, numbered with the transgressors, and the sealing up of the law or testimony among his disciples. And now let me ask, my respected congregation if the work spoken of here is not the everlasting or gospel covenant? Surely! you will answer yes!

I will now proceed to show that this covenant was to be broken.

By turning your attention to the 24th chapter of this same prophecy, you will see that after all the great events just spoken of, "darkness was to cover the earth, and gross darkness the people's minds," and it was to be as with the people, so with the priest, as with the servant, so with his master, as with the maid so with her mistress, &c. The earth also is to be defiled under the inhabitants thereof, "because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant."

Here it is plainly manifest that the prophet while wrapt in the visions of the Almighty saw that Priests and people, masters and servants, all alike should go astray. And, some preaching one thing and some another, they should deny the principle of revelation, transgress the holy laws of the gospel, change the ordinances or laws of adoption into the kingdom of God, and break the everlasting or gospel covenant. And we see by turning our attention to the history of the church that it tells a fearful story on this subject. The whole sectarian world has been built up on the ruins, divisions and sub-divisions of the church of God. Its beauty and glory has departed, and instead of the principle of unity that gave it power and grace, it is like a hydra-headed monster, carrying in its train desolation and death.

Having thus briefly alluded to the prophecies concerning the establishment of the gospel, and all the circum-

stances attended before the fall away or departure from the same. I come to the 28th chapter, in which are found the words of our text, wherein God declares that he will arise and do a work, a strange work, and bring to pass an act, a strange act. It must be our business now to inquire whether this act, this strange act, has any connection with the bringing forth of a book, and causing those that erred by spirit, to come to understanding, and they murmured to learned doctrine.

I beg the close attention of my hearers while I draw from the scriptures, proof of the prophetic character of the Book of Mormon ; show to them by the inspired pages that this is the book which God had promised, and that in its production and reception by the people, the Word has been fulfilled as it is written, God, thereby doing his work, his strange work, and bringing to pass his act, his strange act.

I cannot better introduce the argument, than to repeat a conversation with an intimate friend of the Methodist order, shortly after my conversion to the principles of truth. When he heard that I had turned Mormon, he wrote me an affectionate letter urging me to renounce my error, and again embrace Methodism. I replied to him that I had renounced error in withdrawing from the connexion ; that the scriptures had been opened unto me, and that I saw my way by the light of inspiration and revelation too clearly, to doubt for a moment with regard to the course I had taken. I also proposed to meet him privately, and, the Bible being the rule of evidence, to examine carefully, and candidly, who was in the right, and who in the wrong. He assented to this proposition, and we met. I unfolded the principles, as believed in by the Latter Day Saints, and he gave assent to most of them as being scriptural. He could not however believe in the gifts and graces belonging to the Church, and thought we were blasphemous for believing, notwithstanding I pointed

out to him, and he knew, that Christ had promised them.— There was nothing unscriptural in the words, for they were found in the Bible ; but all these things were “ done away.” Now I read in the Bible that “ signs shall follow the believers ; that they shall speak with new tongues : lay hands on the sick and they shall recover, &c. That there shall be prophets, &c. And I also read that Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of my word shall fail.”

But said my friend, you do not believe in that ridiculous humbug, the Mormon Bible ! In the Book of Mormon I most assuredly believe, returned I, and I believe it, because I believe your scriptures ; and they promise that just such a book shall come forth ; What! replied he the Bible promise another book? I dont believe a word of it ; I never read anything of the kind, and my friend was quite shocked at my assertion, thinking I was given over to hardness of heart and blindness of mind, only for believing what the Bible declared. Very likely you never heard a word, returned I but if you open your Bible with me I will try to enlighten your understanding.

I opened to the 29th chapter of Isaiah, commencing at the 1st verse. But before we commenced the examination, my friend said, you can, perhaps, prove something by taking isolated passages. Ah! replied I, that is the cause of this ungodly generation, and the reason why we see so much spiritual wickedness in high places, the Church of God broken and scattered, and true worshippers going about mourning, because they can find no place of rest. I do not wonder at the great army of sectarians which have grown up on this false system of wresting the words of life from their true meaning.

The word is plain, and stands in beauty and simplicity and order ; so plain that he who runs may read and understand. It stands by the law of God, and will forever stand until the whole world acknowledge “ One Lord, One

Faith, One Baptism." Why ! on the plan of taking a line here, a verse there, and a quotation from the other place I can prove any and every thing that was ever thought of. But this is not the way. "*Search the Scriptures for therein ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.*" But I shall call your attention to a whole chapter, a connected and consolidated testimony. Read the first and 2d verses.

1. "Woe to Ariel, to Ariel, the City where David dwelt ! add ye year to year ; let them kill sacrifices "

Now you agree that this City where David dwelt was Jerusalem ? Yes ! but what has that to do with the argument ? Let me read on for the present. I want you and myself to agree upon a rule of interpretation.

2. " Yet I will distress Ariel, and there shall be heaviness and sorrow : and it shall be unto me as Ariel," &c. to the 7th verse.

My friend here ascribed all this to the destruction of Jerusalem ; the prophecy was plain, and the interpretation sure. But I then called his attention to the 7th verse :

7. " And the multitude of all the nations that fight against Ariel, even all that fight against her, and her munition, and that distress her, *shall be as the DREAM OF A NIGHT VISION.*"

What ! as a dream ? Yes, your Bible says so, and furthermore declares :

8. " It shall even be as when a hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth ; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty : or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold he drinketh, but he awaketh, and behold he is faint, and his soul hath no appetite : so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against Zion."

Here you see that these Gentile Nations and Churches among whom the Jews had been led captive, were to become as the Dream of a Night Vision, supposing they were in possession of something, and yet when they came to their " sober second thoughts," found their religion was but a dream, and as they deny the principle of Revelation, one man's dream is just as good as another's, for without Revelation it is impossible to know God. But further,

9th v. "Stay yourselves and wonder ; cry ye out, and cry : they are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink."

Who are they that stagger and are drunken? It is not a stretch of the imagination, but a solemn and serious truth to say that those who have changed the ordinance, and broken the everlasting covenant, are here alluded to. The sectarians of the day who make long prayers, sit in high places, and who love the traditions of men better than the word of God. Again,

10. "For the Lord hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes; the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered."

A deep sleep has come upon this generation. Prophets they deny, and the seers and rulers are covered with darkness. yet they teach the people a way, which they say is to Heaven, but like the "blind leading the blind. both fall into the ditch." Again,

11th v. "And the vision of all is become unto you AS THE WORDS OF A BOOK THAT IS SEALED, WHICH MEN DELIVER TO ONE THAT IS LEARNED, SAYING, READ THIS, I PRAY THEE; AND HE SAITH, I CANNOT; FOR IT IS SEALED."

What! said my friend, a sealed book? I never read that before. Very likely you never did, or if you did, passed it over as among the things that are "*done away*." But I will show and convince you that the book is not only referred to here, but in numerous passages of the other prophets. Here is the wonder, and in perfect agreement with prophecy, men did deliver the words of the Book of Mormon to one that is learned, in the city of New York, and after careful investigation, he declared that he could not read it, but said the characters bore a resemblance to the ancient Egyptian and Hebrew languages. After asking where this writing was obtained, and receiving answer that an angel of the Lord had delivered it up to men, this learned man destroyed the manuscript by burning it. But the wisdom of the wise was foolishness, for the Book had had been preserved.

12th v. "AND THE BOOK IS DELIVERED TO HIM THAT IS NOT LEARNED, SAYING, READ THIS, I PRAY THEE : AND HE SAITH I AM NOT LEARNED."

Why was the book delivered to the man who declared I am not learned ? Because in all of God's arrangements with his people he has invariably chosen the weak things of this world, yea, even the foolish things that are nought, to confound the wise, that no flesh should glory in his prssence.

It was a great violation of all received notions of propriety, that Joseph Smith, the ignorant, unlearned youth, should pretend to translate these pages and present them before the world as the revealed word of God.

We now come to the 13th verse, where we have the reason fully explained why our heavenly father chose the weak and unlearned to do this great and mighty work,

13 "Wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips, do honor *me* but have removed their hearts far from *me*, and their fear toward, is taught by the precept of men."

Here let us pause! Friends and Brethren, could the prophet, if he had lived in our day, have given a better description of the religious world of the nineteenth century? I answer no! for they draw near to God with their mouths, make long prayers, honor *him* with their lips, but have no heart in the matter, and as to precepts of men, our world is full of them. We have commentary on commentary, creed on creed, and our world is flooded with the opinions of men, instead of the knowledge of God.

We now come to the 14th verse, where the prophet of God, in a most solemn manner announces the fact that the Almighty will arise and do his strange work, and bring to pass his strange act.

It is in the following impressive and soul-stirring language,

"Therefore will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder : for the wisdom of their wise

men shall perish and the understanding of their prudent *men* shall be hid."

Here we see plainly that this strange work was to overthrow the wisdom of the wise. But will they give up their learning without a struggle? No! Turn your attention for a moment to the days when our Saviour called and sent forth unlearned fishermen and tax-gatherers to revolutionize the world, and you will see how learned *pious* priests raged: they were the worst opposers the disciples had, and it is Heaven's truth when I say that our most bitter persecutors are the priests of the present age. If you will pay close attention to the rest of this 29th chapter, you will see this Book was to be unsealed and read, and the poor among men were to rejoice in the holy *one* of Israel. "The land of Lebanon, or Palestine, was to be turned into a fruitful field," "the house of Jacob no longer to wax pale." When this great work of bringing forth and unsealing this Book was accomplished, you will see by the last verse of this chapter, in the following beautiful language, that:—

"They also that erred in spirit were to come to understanding, and they that murmured to learn doctrine."

And surely it must be a good Book, if it brings about such a great and mighty work.

As I have proved that if the Bible is true a book is to come forth, and that if this event is to take place when Israel begins to rejoice, I want to show the history of that people are mentioned in it. God would never send a record unless for some good, wise, and grave purpose; unless he had some grand and important object in view. Whose history, then, are we to expect in the sealed book that we have seen has been promised. Let me direct your particular attention to the 37th chapter of Ezekiel, beginning at the 15th verse.

"15. The word of the Lord came again unto me, saying."

"16. Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it. For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take

another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions :”

“17. And join them one to another into one stick ; and they shall become one in thy hand.”

18. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these ? ”

“19. Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God ; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph which is in the hands of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in my hand.”

The sticks here spoken of every man of intelligence that is acquainted with the history of the past, especially with the history of the Jews, will readily admit that the figure of the sticks, a record and a book is identical and the same thing. Some ignorant persons, foolishly suppose that a book is only something that is printed. I understand that anything that possesses in itself, or has characters engraved upon it that will impart understanding to the mind to be a book : a stone, a board, or, even the doors of Hell, if they have any, when presented to my vision, if they have writing upon them I will consider as a book and respect them accordingly. Do we not speak of the great book of nature with admiration and gratitude ? The whole economy of nature is vocal with the praises of their birth, and proclaim in characters ineffacable, “the hand that made us is Divine.”

But even to the present day, in the Jewish Synagogues, it is the custom to unroll the law from sticks, as it is read from time to time in their congregations. In interpreting prophetic language, we are to regard the modes of expression in common use at the time the prophecy was given ; and interpret it according to the manner in which language was used in the day and age when the prophet lived.

In the Scripture just quoted, the prophet is commanded to take one stick and *write* it for Judah. This stick is the record of God's dealings with him and his generation. He was then commanded to take another stick, and write

upon it for Joseph; this was to be a record of God's dealings with Joseph and his generation. The people were curious with regard to this prophecy. They wanted an interpretation, and so do the people of this generation need light upon the subject. Have we ever had a record of Joseph? No! Then the request which the people made to Ezekiel, is as pertinent now as it was when they made it. And in answer to the question, What meanest thou by these? God commanded him, "Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, &c," as quoted in the 19th verse. Let me ask here where have the children of Joseph been? Can you find any trace of them in the records of the Jews, or in any history. Have they wandered? There is an amount of testimony on this point drawn from the Sacred Writings that is convincing and powerful; that will reach even to heaven, and no candid man who admits the truth of the Bible, will have the hardihood to contradict it, for in doing so, he will impeach the veracity of God Almighty. Where has the House of Joseph been? In elucidation of this question, it will be necessary, first, to refer you to the blessing pronounced by Jacob, upon Joseph and his seed. By turning your attention to the 48th chapter of Genesis, you will there see that after, informing his son Joseph that God Almighty had appeared unto him and blessed him, and he said,

"Behold I will make thee beautiful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people, and give this land to thy seed for an everlasting possession."

He said,

"And now thy two sons Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt, are mine and thy issue which thou begetteth after them shall be thine and shall be called after the name of their inheritance."

We read on further, in the same chapter, that Israel beheld Joseph's sons, and said, "Who are these?" and Joseph replied, "They are my sons, whom God hath given me in this place." And he said, Bring them, I pray

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thee, unto me, and I will bless them. In the next verse, we are told that his eyes were dim with age, so that he could not see, and Joseph's sons were brought near to him, and he embraced them. Further on in the same chapter, we are told, 13th verse,

13. "And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand, towards Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand towards Israel's right hand; and brought them near unto him."

14. "And Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly, for Manasseh was the first-born."

Before proceeding further, it may be well to inquire by what authority Jacob blessed. If he had not authority from on high, and if the blessing which God swore to Abraham and to Isaac, was not also imparted to him, it was nothing more or less than a solemn mockery. It is an eternal principle that when God has imparted power and authority, it must stand, and Jacob held the Melchisedec priesthood, even as it was imparted to Jacob, from Isaac, who received it from Abraham, and Abraham received it from Melchisedec, who was the king of Salem, the prince of peace: and any man who pretends to the right of laying on of hands, without being admitted into this priesthood, is an imposter, and the truth is not in him. Christ himself was a priest after the order of Melchisedec. The religion of the Bible is a science; it is no mockery, and whosoever would understand, must study and search it out.

Thus, you see briefly, the power and authority that Jacob had in imparting blessings. Read ;---

"15. And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long, unto this day."

"16. The Angel, which redeemed me from all evils bless the lads; and let my name be named upon them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac, and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth."

Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the

head of Ephraim and it displeased him, and he held up the hand, saying, "Not so, my father, for this is the first born ; put thy right hand upon his head. His father refused, and said I know it, my son I know it ; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great ; but truly his younger brother shall become a people, and he also shall be great ; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he ; and he shall become a *multitude of nations*."

I want to impress a fact upon your minds. The priests of this and preceeding generations have looked in vain for the seed of Joseph, the house of Ephraim. This prophecy, as contained in the 19th verse, of the chap., from which we have been quoting, says, "HE SHALL BECOME A MULTITUDE OF NATIONS" Why have they not noticed this? In the 49th Chap of Genesis in close connexion with the immediate subject before us, we are told in the 1st verse

"1. And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days."

You will here notice a difference of expression which is well worth looking at, for it at once unfolds an idea that will lead to a better understanding of prophetic writings, and of some expressions in the New Testament books. Whenever the prophets were called upon to pronounce the judgments or blessings of God that were to be fulfilled at some time future, but not at a late age they would say, "*these last days*," meaning the last days of that generation, or that nation to whom the prophecy was given. But when *The last days* are spoken of, the term, undoubtedly, is meant to apply to the last days of the generation of man, immediately preceding the Second Advent of our Savior.

I introduced the first verse of this chapter merely to set this idea clear before your minds. But our inquiry is to look for the seed of Joseph, and therefore it becomes us to see what the blessing of Joseph was. This you will find.

in the 22d, 23d, 24th, 25th, and 26th verses of the 49th chapter. You will perceive that in the 22d verse Joseph is described as "a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall." Here is a beautiful figure, "planted by a well," run over the wall, shall become a multitude of nations, and Isaiah speaking of the House of Joseph, says, "some of the beautiful branches are to be broken off; they have wandered into the wilderness *and have crossed the sea.*" Here is a prophecy carrying out what Jacob had told should come to pass. It may be asked why I take so much trouble with regard to this part of the subject? It is because I want to find out, if possible, by the light of scripture, where the ancient inhabitants of this country, and I expect to prove to you by them that the descendants of Joseph were the original settlers of this continent, and I think I can throw a blaze of light upon this position which it will be impossible to resist.

In this blessing of Jacob, Joseph was told that the blessings of his father have prevailed to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, they shall be on thy head." The sons of Joseph were invested with the Melchisedic priesthood, and Moses was the last man of whom we have any account in the scriptures until the time of Christ.—Ephraim and Manasseh were priests after this order, because Israel laid hands upon them and blessed them according to the blessing which was given to his fathers Abraham and Isaac. Hence Moses, in the 33d chapter of Deuteronomy, from the 13th to the 17th verses, speaks in a particular manner, of the blessings pronounced upon Joseph and his generations, and in the 17th verse, says:

17 "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns *are like horns of two unicorns* with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth; and they are the thousands of Manasseh.

The whole tenor of the scripture on the subject of this blessing, is full, showing that the everlasting hills, and

even the ends of the earth were to be for the inheritance of the seed of Joseph.

We come now to inquire where has the seed of Joseph gone to? If they had taken up their residence in any part of what is technically called the old world would not history have informed us of the fact? There is no place except North and South America to which they could have gone, if the old world furnishes no trace of them. The Continent of America is the only place where the prophecies concerning Joseph and his seed could be fulfilled.

All believe that this country was settled by nations that existed and have passed away in the womb of the past Empires, and kingdoms, and communities have existed in ages long gone by. Arts. and sciences, learning and refinement have found a congenial home on these western shores, and the testimony of their existence is left behind in magnificent ruins, noble even in their decay. The lapse of time has not been powerful enough to eradicate from the surface of the earth, the signs of a people once inhabiting this land clothed with intellectual and scientific power, far transcending, perhaps, any, even the highest effort, of this our boasted 19th century.

We turn our attention to the history of the new world, about the time when Columbus first promulgated to the old world his noble and sublime idea, of the existence of a continent in the West, and when, after innumerable difficulties he proved the truth of his theory, the spirit of discovery was aroused, and numerous expeditions were fitted out.

Here was found the remnant of a people that evidently had been "a multitude of nations," and all springing from the same stock. The history of this people is little known;—they were a noble people; an intellectual people; they were found a fallen people; fallen from glory and grandeur, and their records shrouded in darkness.—The Gentiles then began to gather in, and in a few cen-

turies spread themselves and overcome the remnants of this multitude, until they are now scattered and spread over the vast extent of this continent.

The learned world has been in darkness on the subject of the history of these ancient people. Numerous learned and unlearned theories have been started but all have ended in the same thing. No light has been shed upon it, no new facts of importance have been developed, until all at once, God the Father, sent his angel upon the earth and revealed the fact that a record of the people who in ages past inhabited this continent, had been preserved. This record was produced, and a transcript of it was taken to a learned man, as the scripture had pointed out and he could not translate it, though "*he was learned.*" He, this learned man,—at first said the copy which was presented to him was a mixture of Hebrew and ancient Egyptian, but after inquiring where the record was obtained, and being informed that it came by direct revelation from God, he pronounced it all a jargon, and destroyed the manuscript. The individual who carried this document was Martin Harris. The learned man he carried it to was Prof. Charles Anthon, of New York. This statement has before been published both from the pulpit and the press, and the professor has never yet dared to deny the truth of it.

After this record had been refused by the wise man, it was *delivered* to Joseph Smith, and with it the Urim and Thummim, a key for interpretation which God has given to the House of Israel, but which had been lost by them when they wandered from the fold of God. This key of interpretation was deposited with the plates containing the record. These plates were deposited in a box, in the earth how or where we don't know, but they were most likely placed there by the writer of them; in obedience to a command of God, that the prophecies might be fulfilled and that the generations of the *last days* might be made

acquainted with this most important branch of the history of the Jewish tribes, and of the new world joined together—The Bible, and the Book, (the Book of Mormon,) unite in most perfect and admirable harmony, showing a fulfilment of ancient prophecy, and, also showing that God, is a God of truth, and that all the words spoken by him through the mouths of his prophets must come to pass.

An interpretation of this record was soon given to the world by an unlearned man, and the “dogs of war were let loose.” The uneasy spirit of sectarianism belched forth its filth; and priests and religious papers covered the land with slander, vituperation, affidavits, and most atrocious lies against the interpreter and his adherents. And it was verily thought “That those who turn the world upside down, had come hither also.”

After the Book had been published a few years, what then took place? Why learned men go forth on voyages of discovery, and what do they discover in Central America? Magnificent ruins of cities bearing all the evidences of a high state of refinement. Cities nearly 60 miles in circumference, idols, antiquities, &c., such as are described in this Book of Mormon. I refer here to the discoveries of Catherwood & Stevens in Central America, made nearly ten years after the publication of the book.

A great and standing argument against Joseph Smith is, that he is an ignorant man. Allowing this to be true, the argument of his opposers proves too much. How could an ignorant man unless inspired with the spirit of Almighty God produce a work like the Book of Mormon accurately locating cities, &c., &c. which has afterwards been proven true by the careful researches of learned antiquaries? Here is a question which learned theologians, and experienced sophists may attempt to solve, but the common and religious sense of the community will say that it is indeed “*a wonder and a strange act.*”

The mighty empires that have lived on this continent have dwindled away ; they have been eaten up by the lapse of time, and the living active spirits who were in being, acting out their part in the world, are now sleeping in the dust. Shall we be accused of any thing wicked in making inquiries for their history ? and in trying to prove from God's word that though the history of men has lost sight of them, the eye of Him who never sleeps has not forgotten or forsaken them, but has left his testimony which shall be brought forth in the last days,—That all flesh should see and wonder at the glory of His power and the wisdom of His ways.

The Book of Mormon was produced in the exact time which the prophet mentioned. The two sticks are now produced, which Ezekiel was commanded to prophecy of to this generation. They will be joined together. The record of the House of Ephraim, which is the Book of Mormon was to precede the gathering of the Jews to the City where David dwelt. The book was published in 1830. The Jews as all the world knows began to gather themselves in 1840.—1.

I have heard an objection urged by a sectarian priest on this wise. This record, which you speak so much of is from the ground, and the Bible tells us that whatever springs from the earth is earthy. This is admirable logic and a fair specimen of that used by divines of the present day. I replied that his argument was false in principle because the bodies of the saints were to rise from the earth and surely they are not to be considered as earthy and corrupted. "Oh, no !" said he, but you pretend that the word of God was taken from the earth. Yes ! returned I ! what then ? It is abominable, that you should say so, returned he. "Well," said I, if I can prove from the Holy Bible that truth is to spring from the ground will you believe it ? "Yes !" —

Then, I continued, "open your bible to the 35th Psalm and the 11th verse.

"11. Truth shall *spring out of the earth*, and righteousness shall look down from heaven."

When I pointed this passage to him he uttered a holy groan; he looked to me like the man without the wedding garment. He was caught, in a trap in which he expected I would be caught and had said he would believe if I could give him scripture for my doctrine. When the proof came upon him it was like a thunder clap. The man lied, and to this day he is a most bitter persecutor of the "faith once delivered to the saints." He, with others, could find no objection to the doctrines which we preach. They were, he admitted, God-like, plain, simple, truthful, and glorious. When the proof from the Old Testament scripture was given to the point, he thought I could not corroborate the book from the New Testament. I immediately referred him to that declaration of our Saviour, when he declared "I am 'sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,'" Who are the lost sheep! those who were in Jerusalem? No! all the tribes of Jacob were not there. Where then were they? Ezra says, speaking of the ten tribes, "they went a year and a half's journey to the north country." Are they not then lost sheep? We are told in prophecy that the branches of Joseph are to be broken, and again "that they shall tremble from the west." They could not tremble in the west neither could the ten tribes come from the north country if they were not there.

Again our saviour says: "I have other sheep that are not of this fold." No one will dare say that the Gentiles are here meant, for Christ was not sent to the Gentiles. Undoubtedly the tribes that were in the north country, and the tribe of Joseph that was in the west, are referred to by this language of Christ.

The Book of Mormon informs us that Christ visited this continent after the resurrection, and we believe it, because it is in perfect accordance with the glorious attributes of Jehovah. He would never leave one half of the world in darkness on the subject of revelation, and then punish his creatures eternally for not believing what they never heard. Let orthodox preachers and believers in that doctrine make the most they can from this statement.

But I will leave the scriptural part of the argument, and come now to talk about the testimony we have of the authenticity of the Book of Mormon. People say, oh, if we could only have testimony of the truth of these things, we would believe. Why, my hearers, you have ten times the testimony of the truth of this book that you have of the Bible in which you believe so implicitly. You have living witnesses who declare to you that they have seen for themselves and know that their testimony is true, and some of the best blood of the saints has been shed in Missouri as a seal to this testimony. Think you that it is reasonable for a man to be willing to lay down his life rather than forswear a doctrine, a belief, a people that is every where spoken against unless he believed and knew that God's truth was involved in that belief. Scarcely for a righteous man, or a friend will one die, but Christ died for all, and Christ's followers are willing to walk in the paths he trod for the sake of the truth as it has been revealed unto them.

We are met by the objection that all our witnesses are interested ones. We have witnesses of the same kind that God had. They were interested witnesses. God never had a disinterested witness. The greatest and the vilest sinner on the footstool, the moment he becomes converted, is an interested witness. This arises from the very nature of the case. It must be so. And if members of the Church of Latter Day Saints

testify to you that an angel, or revelation by some other means, has brought these things plain to their minds, you are bound to believe them, if they are honest men. You could not surely believe them, if they said to you, we have seen and heard the things of which we testify, but we are not believers. How can there be a disinterested witness for God?

The Jewish Rabbi's, priests and others who sat in high places had the same right to deny the mission of Christ, as their pharasaical imitators at the present day have to deny new revelation; and the same means were put into operation then, that we now see used, to stifle truth and blind the eyes of the people. The ancient Scribes and Pharisees denied the resurrection of our Lord, and started the story that his disciples came and stole him away, while the soldiers slept. What wonder, then, that their imitators and successors should take the same course?—

In summing up the whole matter, I remark,—that for 1800 years the world has denied revelation. But in *the* last days truth has asserted its supremacy. God had promised revelation, and prophets, apostles, seers, &c., in the Church. The word of God must stand, or the hopes of all the nations of the earth must fall to the ground.

We are told in our text that “God will arise and do his work, his strange work, and bring to pass his act, his strange act.” We have seen by scripture that this work and strange act, was the production of a book that should be sealed to the learned, but which should be interpreted by the unlearned. We have pointed you to the blessing which Israel pronounced upon Joseph and his seed. We have shown from the scriptures that this blessing was carried out and recognized by a succession of prophets. We have proved that the House of Ephraim and Manasseh have wandered, and have taken up their abode in far countries. The Bible has declared to us in Ezekiel's prophecy that the record of this wandering seed, this mul-

titude of nations, shall be joined to that of Judah. That this event shall take place just before Israel begins to return to the promised land. That the Book of Mormon contains this record, and that there are martyrs to the testimony of the truth of it, and numerous living witnesses who are ready to give their lives as a seal to the testimony.

We are, my hearers, on the eve of a mighty revolution. Light is poured upon the nations of the earth in a stream of effulgent glory, and whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear, God the mighty Father, has bared his arm and will show that there is a God in heaven, who will execute justice, and cause every word that is spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets to come to pass. Why do the people stand idle when the truth is searching every heart. We bear to you my friends a message of love and mercy. The time is fast coming when all flesh shall know God. When every man in every place shall find a brother and a friend. When the lion and the lamb shall lie down together. When there shall be no more oppression or despotism on the face of the whole earth. When God shall reign King of Kings, as he now reigns Lord of Lords, and when there shall be no more trouble or division, doubt or uncertainty in all God's Holy Mountain.

May you receive the truth and cherish it. Search the Scriptures. Understand your duty towards God and your fellow man. Perform that duty, and the God of peace and love will be and abide with you forever more.